

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the second paragraph on page 4 with the following paragraph:

Referring to Figs. 2-5, according to the present invention, the interior surface 21 of a sterilization container lid 22 (vent planar member) has a vent 23 formed by holes 24 by which sterilization media can pass through vent planar member 22 into container 10. Although vent 23 is illustrated as a pattern of holes ~~234~~ 24 forming a generally square shape, vent 23 could just as well be a plurality of holes forming a rectangular, circular or some other shape.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 14, with the following paragraph:

Surrounding the vent 23 on the interior surface 21 is a vent recess 26. A soft durometer gasket 27 constructed of temperature tolerant material (such as silicone) is bonded into the recess 26 and surrounds the vent 23. While the gasket 27 is shown having a generally arcuate rectangular cross-section and formed in a square circumferential shape, gasket 27 may have a different cross-section (round, oval, rectangular, triangular, etc.) to accommodate a different size and shape of the vent 23 and vent recess 26. Regardless of the geometry, the gasket 27 is in contact with substantially all of the surface of vent recess 26 and is wholly within the recess 26 so as not to extend above the planar surface 21 of lid 22.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 29, with the following paragraph:

A sheet filter 36 overlays the vent 23 at the interior surface 21 of lid 22 and is secured there by a generally planar filter cover 37 which has a pattern of cover holes 38 (cover vent) that are offset from vent holes 24 (Fig. 4) when cover 37 is mounted and locked in position at by posts 39 ~~by a~~ and locking mechanism 40 (filter cover mounts and locking mechanism). Mechanisms for locking a filter cover to a vent using slots or aligning posts such as posts 39 and establishing positive pressure on the cover against the vent are well known in the art and therefore require no further description.

Please replace second paragraph on page 5 with the following paragraph:

As best seen in Fig. 5, when the vent cover 37 is locked in position over the vent 23 by a filter cover mounting and locking mechanism 39 and 40 with a sheet filter 36 therebetween (the sheet filter 36 is sized to extend over and cover the vent recess 36), the cover ridge 43 is forced against vent recess 26 with a positive pressure, causing filter 36 and gasket 27 to be compressed together between lid 23 and cover 37, establishing a fluid-tight seal surrounding the vent ~~11~~ 23 and cover vent 38. The gasket 27 in the vent recess 26 is critical to the fluid-tight seal and must be undamaged to be an effective barrier against contamination.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 20, with the following paragraph:

While the recess 26 and ridge 43 may be approximately equal in size, the filter 36 and the gasket 27 between the two causes a space 46 to be established therebetween when the cover 37 is fully engaged. This

space, which is greater than the thickness of filter 36, plays an essential role in the movement of sterilization media through the vent 23.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 25, with the following paragraph:

Typically, during a sterilization cycle, sterilizing media enters the interior of the container via the vent 23, through the sheet filter 36 which is disposed between the lid 22 and filter cover 37, while displaced atmosphere exits the same or another filtered vent. Any moisture formed in the sterilization container (not shown) is prevented from escaping the seal surrounding the vent(s) and cover vent 38. Equally important, any fluid on the outside of the container near a vent is prevented from entering the container.